

Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

2008 Refuge Black Bear Hunt Regulations



Public bear hunting by shotgun is permitted on the Refuge on hunting dates listed below and on hunting areas shown on the map. A signed Refuge Hunt permit and a valid State hunting license shall be carried when hunting on the Refuge. Signing the permit means you agree to abide by all terms and conditions of that permit plus all applicable laws, rules and regulations. Violation of any of the applicable state, local or federal laws or refuge regulations will result in the cancellation of your hunt permit and may lead to prosecution in Federal Court.

Hunters utilizing the refuge are subject to inspections of permits, licenses, equipment, bag limits, vehicles and their contents during compliance checks by Refuge Officers, State Wildlife Officers, and other state/local law enforcement officers.

ACCESS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED WITHOUT A SIGNED PERMIT AND A COMPASS.

Season and Bag Limits

December 12 and December 13, 2008.

Rain dates: December 19 and 20, 2008 (if necessary).

Bag Limit: One bear per hunter per season statewide; must be greater than 100 lbs.

No sows with cubs.

Harvest Limit

The refuge harvest limit will be a maximum of 20 bears. The take will be monitored and if more than 10 bears are harvested on the first day, various parameters will be evaluated and the second hunt day may be cancelled. Please note that in the event that the harvest may be higher than desired on the first day, three siren blasts will be sounded along access roads to alert hunters and all hunters must leave the hunt area immediately. (If you hear a single long blast on the siren or a vehicle horn this is to help locate a lost hunter and only the lost hunter will be leaving the hunt area.)

Scouting

An official scouting day will be held on December 6 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Only hunters with signed permits and a compass will be allowed access into the refuge hunting areas on the scouting day. You may have no weapons in possession.

Hours

Gates will open at 5:30am and close at 6:30pm.

Legal shooting time is ½ before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.

Refuge Check-in/Check-out and Check Station

Access to the designated hunt areas will be provided only through the two designated entrances: Railroad Ditch Road and Jericho Lane. All hunters must sign in and sign out at one of the two designated entrance points each time they enter and leave the refuge. When an entrance reaches capacity, that area is closed to all other hunters for the day, even if a hunter checks out. **All successful hunters must take their bear to the bear check station located at the refuge maintenance area, 3216 Desert Road, Suffolk, VA.**

Firearms and Ammunition

- Only 20 gauge shotgun or larger.
- Hunters may only use and have in their possession slugs; buckshot is prohibited.
- All other firearms are prohibited and may not be in possession.
- You must unload, and encase or dismantle firearms transported via motorized vehicles on all refuge roads.
- Possession of loaded firearms (any ammunition in the chamber, magazine or clip) on or within 50 feet of a refuge road, including roads closed to vehicles, is prohibited.

Tree Stands

Tree stands must be removed from the refuge at the end of each hunt day. Hunters will not be permitted to return to retrieve their stands. No nails, screws or any other device that harms trees can be used.

Hunter Orange

All hunters are required to wear a minimum of 400 square inches of solid-colored blaze orange on their chest, shoulders, back, and head during the hunt. Camouflage hunter orange does not meet this requirement. A hat alone does not meet this requirement - a vest or other upper body garment is recommended to meet the requirement.

Foot Bridges and Car Top Boats

Some of the deeper ditches have foot bridges to facilitate access to hunt areas. All require caution when crossing and are slippery when wet. Car top boats may also be used to cross ditches.

Delays and Cancellations

Hunts may be cancelled due to high fire danger

or when severe weather is predicted or has occurred. If a cancellation is necessary, every effort will be made to make that decision by noon of the day before the scheduled hunt. If any hunt dates are cancelled due to weather or road conditions, make-up dates will be scheduled on December 19 and 20, 2008. No other "make up" dates will be provided.

Please call 757/986-3705 if the status of any scheduled hunt date is questionable. This hunt information line will provide the latest hunt information 24 hours a day effective noon, December 11, 2008.

Also Prohibited

- Access to refuge at any location other than through designated entrances to hunt areas at Jericho Lane, and Railroad Ditch Roads.
- The use of boats on Lake Drummond, the Feeder Ditch, or the Dismal Swamp Canal to access hunting areas.
- Hunting on any area that is not designated as part of the refuge hunt area by signs or current hunt map.
- Shooting from or across a refuge road including roads closed to vehicles.
- Driving motorized vehicles off the roads and/or on roads closed to vehicles.
- Parking vehicles in any manner which blocks roads (including roads closed to vehicles).
- The use of permanent markers, such as paint, to locate stands or trails.
- Baiting or hunting over bait.
- Possession of alcoholic beverages.
- Camping and all overnight use.
- Possession of dogs on the refuge during any designated hunt date without a valid dog retrieval permit. If you are retrieving dogs under a dog retrieval permit you may not possess a firearm.
- Possession of rifles, pistols, dogs.
- Littering, fires and the use of boat trailers.

Safety and Other Regulations

1. In case of an emergency call 911.
2. As a requirement of your permit, you must carry a compass in your possession at all times. Know how to use it!
3. Refuge wide speed limit is 25 mph on all refuge roads. Radar and other speed measuring devices are used to enforce speed limits.

SEE SAFETY NOTES FOR MORE INFORMATION